



CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD

MINUTES OF FORMAL HEARING AND SELECT COMMITTEES MEETING #651

**Friday, November 15, 2002 – 9 A.M and 2 P.M.
Veterans Memorial Building
Clovis, CA**



OPENING COMMENTS/ INTRODUCTIONS:

The California Veterans Board (CVB) formal hearing was called to order at 9:00 a.m. California Veterans Board members present included Chairman George Sinopoli (Fresno), Vice Chair Edward Feldman (Westlake Village), Members Jerry Basconcillo (Delano), Larry Lattman (California Veterans Home in Yountville) and Leo Burke (Stockton). Judy Gaze (San Diego) was excused. Legal Counsel Joe Maguire and CVB Executive Officer Earl Steck were also present.

The Department Commander of The American Legion led the Pledge of Allegiance and members of the audience introduced themselves.

Chairman Sinopoli advised the first order of business was a formal hearing for Michael Sinopoli, who was appealing denial of tuition fee waiver. He explained that he would recuse himself from Board action because the appellant is his grandson. He appointed Vice Chair Feldman to conduct the hearing.

John Jackson, Legal Counsel for the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA), made his opening statement. Mr. Jackson asked the Board to take judicial notice of sections of the California Military and Veterans Code and sections of the California Education Code that pertain to the present appeal. Mr. Sinopoli had applied for tuition fee waiver and received an application. The application clearly states that tuition fee waiver will be based on the previous year's income of the applicant. Mr. Sinopoli's previous year's income was \$26,000. Under the Education Code, the income limit is based on the national poverty level, currently \$8,959. On that basis, Mr. Sinopoli was denied the benefit. The law does not allow the approval of Mr. Sinopoli's application and CDVA has no authority to override the law.

Michael Sinopoli, in his opening statement, said the University of California at Davis bases the qualifying income on either the previous year's income or the projected present year income. He explained his course of study, Medicine Physician Assistant Program, requires him to attend school full time and take 22 credits. It does not allow time for employment. He asked why the CDVA could not use the same bases for qualifying income as is used by the University.

Mr. Sinopoli explained that students in medicine and law are allowed to use projected income because their courses leave little time for employment. A copy of a letter from the University was provided to the Board. Dr. Feldman noted that the letter is an acknowledgment of the change in financial status after enrolling in the University full time and asks for further information in evaluating eligibility for financial aid.

Mr. Lattman asked if the letter referred to financial aid requested from the University and Mr. Sinopoli replied that it did. Mr. Lattman asked if it had anything to do with the financial aid sought from CDVA. Mr. Sinopoli said it did not, but that he offered it to show that the University used a different method of determining qualifying income under the laws in effect.

Mr. Jackson called upon Butch Songer, County Veterans Service Officer for Fresno County, to testify. In response to questions from Mr. Jackson, Mr. Songer testified that his job involves assisting veterans in applying for all types of benefits that are available. He said he has held his position for over 29 years and is familiar with the Military and Veterans Code provisions pertaining to income limits in connection with applying for tuition fee waiver programs in the California college and university systems. During his years of service, the eligibility for tuition fee waiver has always been based upon the previous year's income to determine qualification for fee waiver for the upcoming academic year. Mr. Sinopoli's application was presented as evidence and Mr. Songer testified that he explained to Mr. Sinopoli that the qualifying income was the most critical part of being accepted for tuition fee waiver and that the previous year's income was what must be qualifying. He said Mr. Sinopoli was aware of the problem at the time the application was prepared and that the application had to be denied as a matter of law. In reply to further questions, Mr. Songer testified that over the past three years, between 92% and 95% of applications had been granted. The statewide approval rate is 94%. During calendar year 2001, there were 12,982 applications for tuition fee waiver, of which only 714 were denied. It is unknown how many others might have applied if the income levels were higher.

Mr. Jackson explained there are two fee waiver programs. There is no financial limit in the Plan A program. However, Mr. Sinopoli would qualify only under the Plan B program, which does have the financial limitation. The limitation is determined by provisions of the Education Code and can be changed only by action of the Legislature.

In reply to further questions by Mr. Jackson, Mr. Songer testified that he had never had Fresno State University or Fresno State College ask for projected income as a basis for qualifying for financial aid as opposed to previous year's income.

Mr. Sinopoli explained that U.C. Davis determines income qualification for financial aid somewhat differently. Dr. Feldman asked Mr. Sinopoli if he qualifies for any of the financial benefit programs offered by U.C. Davis and Mr. Sinopoli replied that he does qualify for student loans based upon his projected income.

Dr. Feldman thanked Mr. Sinopoli for bringing the matter to the Board's attention. He said the Board would look further into the matter and make recommendations if it is determined that the laws or regulations should be changed so that more students can benefit.

In his closing statement, Mr. Jackson explained that it is his legal opinion that the Board cannot grant this appeal as a matter of law, based upon the income limit in the Education Code.

Mr. Sinopoli closed by saying that using the national poverty level of \$8,959 as a basis for tuition fee waiver is unreasonable in the State of California. He said he appealed the decision primarily to bring the

matter to the attention of the Board and to encourage the Board to seek legislative changes that would bring the benefit to more veterans and dependents of veterans.

Dr. Feldman said the Board would take the matter under consideration. The meeting recessed at 10:18 a.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m.

SELECT COMMITTEES REPORTS:

Policy and Procedures – Edward Feldman, Chair: Dr. Feldman proposed a policy to identify residents of Veterans Homes by initials when it is necessary to discuss personal information during a meeting. He explained that is standard procedure in hospital settings.

Annual Report – Jerry Basconcillo, Chair: Mr. Basconcillo explained to the audience that the California Veterans Board Annual Report to the State Legislature reports its activities, accomplishments and expenditures. The latest was submitted to the Governor's Office for approval on September 13, 2002. The report is required by provisions of the California Military and Veterans Code.

Veterans Services – Jerry Basconcillo, Chair: Mr. Basconcillo asked Glen Halsey, Chief of Veterans Services, to give his report.

Mr. Halsey said he has been working on the tuition fee waiver program as requested by the Board. The Division's annual report should be ready for presentation to the Board in December. He plans to have an annual report on his division ready each year by August for presentation to the CDVA executive staff. Shortly thereafter, it will be provided to the Board. There is no statutory requirement for such a report, but it is something he wants to provide. There is a contract with a DVBE printer for 250 copies of the report on homeless veterans in California and he expects that to be ready for distribution in December. This is the report requested by the Board. The first DVBE Council meeting is scheduled for November 18. This is to give CDVA information on the effective use of DVBE contracting.

Appeal Findings: Board Member Feldman asked to present the findings of the Board on the appeal of Michael Sinopoli that had been heard earlier in the day. He said the Board recognizes the limitations of the tuition fee waiver program and will work on options to improve it. At this time, **the Board has no other option but to deny Mr. Sinopoli's appeal.**

Veterans Homes - Larry Lattman, Chair: Mr. Lattman reported a new smoking policy had been adopted in Barstow that has caused a great deal of unrest among the residents. Copies of the policy have been provided to Undersecretary Tom Kraus and Legal Counsel Joe Maguire. In Yountville, three renovation projects are in process, including the modernization of the Lincoln Theater. The Allied Council voted down a proposal for a cultural center on the Yountville grounds. There is another proposal for a trail over the grounds of the Yountville Home. For many reasons, the residents are against this proposal and the Allied Council is prepared to act. There will be a more detailed report at the next Board meeting. There was some discussion and it was reported that this proposal had been brought up several years ago and easement over the Yountville Home property had been denied at that time. The proponents of the trail are quite assertive and the CDVA and Board must get involved to protect the interests of the veterans.

Contract Review - Jerry Basconcillo, Chair: No contracts for review at this time.

Recognitions and Awards – George Sinopoli, Chair: Chairman Sinopoli explained that this Board has established a process to recognize the contributions by veterans' organizations, leaders of veterans'

groups, elected and appointed officials, and individuals who give of themselves to the veteran community.

Legislation – Leo Burke, Chair: Mr. Burke said the Legislature would be back in session in January 2003. He reported that the Governor's Commission on Veterans Homes was active and that he had traveled with Chairman Sinopoli looking at proposed sites. A new site will have to be chosen for the proposed home in Redding as it was determined there is insufficient sewer capacity in the area that had been proposed. A site in Fresno must also be found. The other proposed homes are on-track.

Farm and Home - Judy Gaze, Chair: Ms. Gaze arrived at the meeting late because of weather conditions. She reported there are a number of issues regarding insurance and Division staff would be reporting at the meeting on Saturday. She is working with Jerry Beaver on policies and there will be a number of changes as some policies are outdated. Ms. Gaze will provide draft policies to the Board members.

Appeals – George Sinopoli, Chair: Chairman Sinopoli asked for reports on appeals.

Dr. Feldman reported a formal hearing to be held on December 6 at the meeting in Yountville regarding denial of admission to the Yountville Home.

Ms. Gaze reported on an appeal in connection with an insurance claim under the Cal-Vet program. She determined from the evidence that the loss is not covered under the Disaster Indemnity. She will recommend that the appeal be denied, but will follow-up to ensure that the veteran is getting the assistance he needs to repair the damage.

Ms. Gaze reported another appeal relates to VA assistance money being paid to the Chula Vista Home. The resident is receiving additional funds because he is legally blind. However, the home is not providing the additional assistance. Her research has shown that this type of situation is handled differently at Yountville. Joe Maguire, Chief Counsel for CDVA, reported that John Jackson of his office had determined that the Chula Vista Home was required to take the additional funds under the law. It was suggested that CDVA seek legislation to change the law since it is not equitable. Ms. Gaze said she will follow up on the matter.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Update on Department Balance Score Card Report

Report was presented by Cheryl J. Franz, A.P.R.N., Nurse Consultant for Quality/Projects, Veterans Home Division, CDVA.

The Balanced Score Card is a system benchmarking a strategic plan relating to services provided by Veterans Homes, the resources used, the financial expenditures, etc. This is a status report. The Division is moving from a rules-governed body to a more mission-driven group of resources. It is becoming more customer driven and pro-active in providing care, rather than crisis driven. The components are human resources, quality of service, finances used, services offered, and business strategy. Risk management identified resident profiles that put the facility at risk for noncompliance and safety issues. Combining statutory and regulatory data requirements, the Division started at the most basic level of data collection. The Division has collected all the manageable quality data into a benchmarking format that will be available in December 2002. Eventually the format will include all components—services, resources, quality and finances.

Bruce Phillips, Veterans Services Division, explained the purpose of the scorecard is to be able to print, publish and hand out the information. For example, a standard will be the number of drugs that are administered. A grade will be given. The information will be made available and used to compare the Homes to other long-term care facilities in the country. It will be used to report to the Governor's Office, the Legislature and regulatory agencies.

Ms. Franzl explained the service measure data points that include customer satisfaction surveys, resident and family council minutes, customer interviews, complaints, medical record audits and incident reports. Information will also be gathered from community volunteers. Data points include donations (post fund), number of volunteers, number of public affairs contacts and a measure of the support from volunteers. Other data include numbers of hostile hearings or meetings and numbers of complaints to the Governor, Legislature or the Cal-Vet Board. Resource measures on employees will include retention, satisfaction, turnover rate and exit interview data.

Quality measure examples include public records on clinical practice indicators. These include information on pressure ulcers, prevention and management of falls, palliative care management, pain management, behavioral management, nutrition and weight management, infection management, walking improvement and delirium. Data is also gathered from consultant reviews. Consultants visit the three existing Homes. They provide reviews on dietary, pharmacy, medicine, nursing and rehabilitation factors. There are also outside reviews from the Department of Health Services, Department of Social Services and the USDVA and data is collected from their surveys and audits. The point is to transition from reacting to problems to being proactive in identifying and preventing problems.

After some further discussion about the objectives of the Balanced Score Card Reports, Chairman Sinopoli adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

**CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD
MINUTES OF GENERAL SESSION #651
Saturday, November 16, 2002 – 9:00 AM
Veterans Memorial Building
Clovis, California**

GENERAL SESSION:

The California Veterans Board (CVB) monthly public meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM. Board members present included Chairman George Sinopoli (Fresno), Vice Chairman Edward Feldman (Westlake Village), Members Jerry Basconcillo (Delano), Judy Gaze (San Diego), Larry Lattman (California Veterans Home in Yountville) and Leo Burke (Stockton).

Gordon Pickett led the invocation. Jim Berry led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Sinopoli introduced the members of the Board; Joe Maguire, Legal Counsel to the Board; and CVB Executive Officer Earl Steck.

Undersecretary Tom Kraus introduced personnel from the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA), to include John Hanretty, Chief of the Finance Division, George Flores, Chief of the Farm and Home Purchases Division; Glen Halsey, Chief of Veterans Services Division. He also introduced Jerry Hansen, Inspector General of the CDVA.

The audience introduced themselves.

MOTION passed to approve minutes from the CVB meetings of October 4 and 5, 2002.

Chairman Sinopoli welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He said the Board had an excellent informal meeting on Friday, at which members of the audience are invited to speak at any time. At this formal meeting, comments by the audience will be at the end of the meeting and are limited to three minutes each.

REPORT FROM BOARD MEMBERS ON ACTIVITIES FOR SEPTEMBER:

Member Larry Lattman reported a very busy month at the Veterans Home in Yountville. He attended the Board meeting in Chula vista in October and he spoke at two meetings explaining California's commitment to veterans going back to 1899.

Member Judy Gaze attended the Board meeting in San Diego in October and visited the Yountville Home for a luncheon recognizing Women Veterans' Month in October. Spouses of veterans were also recognized.

Member Leo Burke reported attending the Board meeting in October. He thanked Judy Gaze for the special events to which Board members were invited.

Member Ed Feldman attended the CVB monthly meeting in San Diego. He participated as a member of the Inspector General's Task Force and visited the hospital at Yountville. He also spoke at a meeting at Camp Pendleton and attended meetings of the Marine Corps Association.

Member Jerry Basconcillo reported attending the Board meeting in San Diego and Chula Vista in October. He attended Marine Corps festivities and the stand down in Bakersfield.

Chairman Sinopoli reported he also attended the Board meeting and festivities in San Diego and Chula Vista. He said he particularly enjoyed seeing the Marines graduate at the Marine Recruiting Center and the cruise around the bay. He attended a commanders' symposium in Sacramento, a stand down in Bakersfield, visited with veterans in Visalia at the VA hospital, visited The American Legion Post in Visalia and met with city officials to discuss the proposed Veterans Home in Fresno County.

All Board Members also reported attending ceremonies in honor of Veterans' Day.

REPORTS:

(Status of CDVA Division / Select Cal Vet Board (CVB) Committees / Special)

VETERANS HOMES OF CALIFORNIA, CDVA DIVISION:

Undersecretary Krause said he would include the report on the Veterans Home Division in his report later in the meeting.

VETERANS HOMES CALIFORNIA, CVB Committee, Larry Lattman. Mr. Lattman talked about the renovation projects going on at Yountville Veterans Home. The barracks at Jefferson Hall are being remodeled and work is being done at Holderman Hospital. He reported that Board Member Leo Burke had visited the home on Veterans' Day. He also talked about the Ridge Trail that is being proposed by a Bay Area organization. It would encroach on land owned by the Yountville Home and is opposed by the Allied Council. He will report to the Board and the CDVA in more detail at the later date.

FARM AND HOME PURCHASES, CDVA DIVISION – George Flores, Chief - The new fire and hazard insurance excess coverage was written on October 31, 2002, with only a 1.43% net increase in premiums. There will be no increase in premiums to the Cal-Vet loan holders. All the coverage and the placing of the policies were reviewed with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and with Judy Gaze, Chair of the Board's Farm and Home Purchases Committee. The Division will be meeting with Member Gaze to recommend lowering the Cal-Vet interest rate on revenue bond loans and unrestricted fund loans. The Division continues to process loans within 30 days and will do its best to accommodate those who must close in a shorter length of time.

The Division is continuing to finalize the details of the new life and disability insurance coverage with Standard Insurance. Notice will go out on the December Cal-Vet statements advising that there is a new insurance company. Standard continues to do everything possible to be sure no details will be overlooked in the conversion.

FARM AND HOME PURCHASES, CVB Committee, Judy Gaze: Ms. Gaze thanked Mr. Flores and Jerry Beaver of his staff for the time they have taken to discuss Cal-Vet interest rates and insurance issues. They have also worked as a team on reviewing the Board policies that affect the Cal-Vet program. She asked the Board members to read the information she has provided so that action may be taken at the next meeting.

VETERANS SERVICES DIVISION – Glen Halsey, Chief - The Division has developed some proposed policies and will be working with Member Basconcillos to have them finalized. The report on homeless veterans in California, which was commissioned by the Board, is being printed and will be

available soon. The Legislature is also interested in the report. It is planned to have a homeless veterans summit around the middle of March 2003 and the Board will be asked to present the report. The report is on the CDVA website. Mr. Halsey explained that the Division has been working on proposed changes in the tuition fee waiver program to see if the program can serve more students. The income level limitation is now the national poverty level, which is too low to address needs in California. At Chairman Sinopoli's request, Mr. Halsey has been working with Jim Stodola, CVSO, San Diego, to determine how the income limitation can be changed and what the risk factors are in the proposed changes. They want to ensure that the program will not be damaged by the changes. Two options they have identified are to do away with having to consider the value of support a student receives from parents and to use the Employment Development Department's calculations for income needed in California (California poverty level).

VETERANS SERVICES, CVB Committee, Veterans Services, Jerry Basconcillo: He thanked Mr. Halsey for his work on the homeless veterans report and is looking forward to having it distributed.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES, CVB Committee, Edward Feldman: Dr. Feldman thanked Board Member Gaze for the input she had provided from the Farm and Home Purchases Division. He also thanked Mr. Halsey for the work he was doing on the tuition fee waiver program.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT, CDVA – John Hanretty, Chief, Finance Division – Mr. Hanretty reported contracts in excess of \$250,000 must be approved by the Board. They are now working on an invitation for bid for pharmacy services in southern California. It will be brought to the Board for review when it is ready.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT, CVB Committee, Jerry Basconcillo. Mr. Basconcillo said he had nothing to add at this time.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, CDVA – Jerry Jones, Chief of Legislative and Public Affairs, was not in attendance.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, CVB Committee, Leo Burke. Mr. Burke commented that Governor Davis had supported and signed the most legislative proposals benefiting veterans in many years. Particularly important was the legislation on veterans' homes that was supported by both the Governor and the Speaker of the Assembly and gained unanimous support through their efforts.

Member Gaze reported on pending federal legislation, which might partially address the problem of military retirees who have disability ratings not being allowed to receive additional disability pay. A bill that may pass this session would allow those retirees who have a disability rating of 10% or higher and who also have a Purple Heart and those retirees who have a disability rating of 60% or higher for injuries that are attributable to combat situations, including combat training, to be eligible for their disability pay in addition to their retirement pay. She said the problem in including all retired military with disability ratings is the expense and that President Bush had said he would veto such legislation. Ms. Gaze will follow up on the matter and will request the support of the Board should additional legislation be proposed in the next session.

ANNUAL REPORT, CVB Committee, Jerry Basconcillo: Mr. Basconcillo said the Board's Annual Report was in the hands of the Governor and the Legislature and that work would begin on the next report.

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS, CVB Committee, George Sinopoli: Chairman Sinopoli explained the Board recognizes people who have helped veterans in special ways. He asked Dick Nelson, American Legion Post No. 147, to come forward and accept the Board's recognition in the form of a plaque.

APPEALS, CVB Committee, George Sinopoli:

Board Member Feldman reported that the appeals of Bryon Daugherty, request for formal hearing of denial of admission to the Veterans Home at Yountville, and John J. Griffen, review of records, denial of admission to the Veterans Home at Yountville, will be heard in December.

Board Member Gaze recommended that the appeal of Stephen Pay, from the denial of coverage of loss under the Disaster Indemnity coverage in the Cal-Vet program, be denied. The evidence does not support Mr. Pay's claim that the loss was due to earthquake. However, the CDVA will contact Mr. Pay and try to provide him assistance in having his property repaired correctly.

MOTION passed unanimously to deny the appeal for coverage under Disaster Indemnity.

Dr. Feldman reported that a formal hearing of Michael Sinopoli's appeal of denial of tuition fee waiver had been conducted by the Board on November 15. The problem is that Mr. Sinopoli's income exceeded the limitation set in the Education Code. As a matter of law, the appeal had to be denied.

MOTION passed unanimously to deny the appeal for tuition fee waiver requested by Mr. Sinopoli.

Board Member Leo Burke will report on the appeal of Ernest Snarr from denial of admission to the Veterans Home at Yountville at the next meeting in December.

Board Member Gaze reported on the appeal of James Teryison. He is a resident of the Chula Vista Home who receives VA assistance money because he is legally blind. Under current law, the payments must go directly to the Home, even though he is provided no special service by the Home. It does not appear that the law is enforced consistently and she asked that the Board make recommendations for changes. However, the appeal must be denied at this point as a matter of law.

MOTION passed unanimously to deny appeal relating to payment of VA assistance for Mr. Teryison.

LEGAL DIVISION, Joseph Maguire, Deputy Secretary/Chief Counsel: Mr. Maguire reported the current caseload in the Law Division includes 15 personnel actions, 7 bankruptcies, 2 Board of Control claims, 7 citations, 33 civil litigations, 5 contract reviews, 2 EEOC claims, 5 insurance cases, 32 requests for legal opinions, 1 quiet title action, 14 unlawful detainers and 23 miscellaneous cases for a total of 146 cases.

The more significant issues include the Carter appeal where the CDVA has a judgment against it in the amount of \$579,000. CDVA believes the judgment to be incorrect in the third party liability case involving one of the veterans' homes. It involves an employee who sued because of the actions of a resident. A recent case, Salazar v. Paratransit, is very similar. A passenger on a bus was harassing a bus driver. The Court of Appeals ruled there is no third-party liability. Mr. Maguire is fairly confident that the CDVA will prevail in its appeal.

There continue to be Northridge earthquake cases because of the actions of former Commissioner Quackenbush. They are working on the Bay Area Ridge Trail that was mentioned earlier by Board Member Lattman. It is another attempt to encroach on the property of the Yountville Veterans Home. Mr. Maguire reported he hopes to have the Debbs case dismissed in January 2003. The Law Division

recently wrote a Disaster Indemnity contract that will be put into effect. Mr. Maguire recently wrote a regulation for the CVSOs on subvention funds. It is in the 45-day period of public comment that will end January 10, 2003.

MARKETING – Ron Brand – Mr. Brand reported on the problems being faced by the Veterans Home Commission in finding sites for two of the proposed new homes in Redding and Fresno County.

INSPECTOR GENERAL, Jerry Hansen: Mr. Hansen reported a Task Force had been formed to determine the most appropriate use of Holderman Hospital at Yountville. He will brief the Board on the recommendations at the next meeting. There was a recent news article about Medicare billing at Yountville. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs asked Mr. Hansen to have his office look into the matter. No evidence of Medicare fraud was found. There was no willful intent to bill incorrectly, but some billing and reporting procedures needed to be improved. The period of time reported in the news article was mid-1999 to mid-2001. Many improvements had been made prior to the time the news article actually appeared in 2002. CDVA is actively working to upgrade the Meditech data dictionaries and working with United Government Services to resolve any charges billed and reimbursed by Meditech incorrectly.

The Deputy Inspector General will be retiring and the staff will be down to only two people. This will have a significant effect on the ability to provide services to the CDVA. Mr. Hansen will be working with Tom Kraus to determine which audits have the highest priority. He is currently working on internal audits on contracting and personnel.

SECRETARY'S COMMENTS: Tom Kraus, Undersecretary, reported for Secretary Thiesen. He discussed the budget challenges faced by the CDVA. The Department of Finance (DOF) now recognizes the CDVA is in the care-giving business, and those components are exempt from budget cuts at this point. He said the Yountville operating budget is flawed and that has been reported to DOF. Data is being gathered to make corrections so that proper budgeting can be ensured. A team of DOF auditors is looking into the matter also. They are trying to identify a stable source of funding.

John Hanretty said there is a need for new collection and expenditure formulas. The DOF is assisting in determining accurate forecasting. They are also looking into the efficiency of operations at the veterans' homes. Financial reports due to the Legislature will be provided to the Board as they are released. Subjects of the reports are collections of moneys due and cash flow needs for each of the veterans' homes.

The major project at the Yountville Veterans Home is the reorganization of the management structure. He thanked the Inspector General and members of the Task Force for the excellent job being done. The USDVA hospital in San Francisco is interested in working with the Yountville Home on various projects. Yountville currently has 1,085 residents, of whom 213 are in the Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF). There are two residents in acute care in Holderman Hospital.

There are major changes in process at the Barstow Veterans Home. Mr. Kraus asked for Larry Lattman's assistance in determining a proper smoking policy in Barstow. Chairman Sinopoli approved Mr. Lattman's participation. The census at Barstow is 257 residents, 94 of whom are in the SNF.

The biggest issue at the Chula Vista Home continues to be staffing, but community support is very positive. There are currently 251 residents, 50 of whom are in the SNF. The Chula Vista Home is now certified to bill both Medicare and Medi-Cal.

PUBLIC COMMENT – THREE MINUTE LIMIT:

(Board Policy Prohibits Response from Board Members)

Jim Berry, The American Legion, spoke regarding his hope that a veterans home could have been built in Coalinga. He expressed his disappointment that the site had been denied.

UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS:

George Flores, Chief of Farm and Home Purchases Division, gave an update on the Cal-Vet life and disability insurance program. See detail in minutes for meeting of November 15.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was discussion regarding the calendar for Veterans Board meetings during 2003. There will be no meeting in January 2003. Proposed dates and locations for meetings to be held February through May 2003 are as follows: February 7-8, Chula Vista; March 7-8, Sacramento; April 11-12, Barstow; May 9-10, Fresno area. No meeting will be scheduled for June 2003.

MOTION passed unanimously to set dates and locations for meetings to be held February through May 2003.

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS:

All meetings take place on Friday and Saturday unless notified.

Yearly schedule is posted on web site: www.cdva.ca.gov/board

CLOSING REMARKS:

CLOSED SESSION (if necessary or required)

The general reason or reasons for a closed session, and the specific statutory authority therefore, are (1) to consider the appointment or employment of a public employee under the authority of Section 11126(a) of the Government Code; and (2) to confer with or receive advice from the Board's legal counsel regarding pending litigation under the authority of Section 11126(E)(2)(A), (2)(B), and (3) of the Government Code.

- There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.
- These minutes are only a summary of the proceeding and are not reported here verbatim.
- These minutes are posted to the California Department of Veterans Affairs on-line website at www.cdva.ca.gov/board

ADJOURNED

NOTE: A public meeting of the following Select Committees was held on Friday November 15, 2002 at 2 p.m. at the Veteran Memorial Building, Clovis, CA The following topics discussed: Annual Report, Appeals, Contract Review, Farm and Home, Legislation, Policy and Procedures, Recognition and Awards, Veterans Homes, and Veterans Services.